<u>REMARKS</u>

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 28, 2007. Claims 1, 4 to 7, 9 to 12, and 14 to 16 are in the application. Claims 1 and 12 are independent. Claims 1, 4 to 7, 9 to 12, and 14 to 16 have been amended herein. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 4 to 7, 9 to 12, 14 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Publication No. 2002/0032839 (Yamamoto) in view of U.S. Publication No. 2004/0037174 (Uchida). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

The present invention generally concerns a storage unit which is detachable from an information processing apparatus. A controller controls storage of data into a storage medium in the storage unit, and an eject instruction to eject the storage unit from the information processing apparatus is received by the storage unit.

According to one aspect of the invention, when the eject instruction is received by the storage unit, the storage unit invalidates a connection with the information processing apparatus, waits until an operation which should be complete in the storage unit before the storage unit is ejected is complete, and outputs an eject permission signal to the information processing apparatus for ejecting the storage unit.

By virtue of this arrangement, it is ordinarily possible to ensure that the storage unit is ejected safely after the completion of all necessary activities such as writing data, while relieving the information processing apparatus from having to stall and wait during such time.

Referring specifically to claim language, independent Claim 1 is directed to a storage unit which is detachable from an information processing apparatus having an ejecting

unit configured to eject the storage unit, the storage unit having a storage medium for storing data from the information processing apparatus. The storage unit includes a controller for controlling storage of data into the storage medium, a receiving unit configured to receive an eject instruction to eject the storage unit from the information processing apparatus, an invalidation unit configured to invalidate a connection with the information processing apparatus when the receiving unit receives the eject instruction, and a waiting unit configured to wait until an operation which should be complete in the storage unit before the storage unit is ejected is complete, after the invalidation unit starts to invalidate the connection. The storage unit further includes an output unit configured to output an eject permission signal, as a response to the eject instruction, to the information processing apparatus for ejecting the storage unit by the ejecting unit after completion of the wait of the waiting unit. The invalidation unit, the waiting unit and the output unit are arranged inside the storage unit.

Independent Claim 12 is directed to a method substantially in accordance with the storage unit of Claim 1.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of the present invention, and in particular is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of (i) invalidating, by a storage unit, a connection with an information processing apparatus when an eject instruction is received, (ii) waiting, by the storage unit, until an operation which should be complete in the storage unit before the storage unit is ejected is complete, after the invalidation unit starts to invalidate the connection, and (iii) outputting an eject permission signal to the information processing apparatus as a response to the eject instruction, after completion of the waiting.

As understood by Applicants, Yamamoto is directed to a cache for storing acquired information in an HDD or DVD-RAM. The system is controlled such that writing of the cache contents is completed before the DVD-RAM is removed from the browser apparatus. See Yamamoto, Abstract.

Page 5 of the Office Action concedes that Yamamoto does not disclose receiving an eject instruction for ejecting a storage unit from an information apparatus. Applicants agree, and submit that it logically follows that Yamamoto also can not disclose or suggest a storage unit invalidating a connection with an information processing apparatus when such an eject instruction is received.

In addition, since Yamamoto does not disclose a storage unit invalidating a connection with the information processing apparatus upon receiving an eject instruction, it logically follows that Yamamoto cannot disclose a storage unit waiting until an operation is complete following the start of such invalidation.

Furthermore, pages 5 and 6 of the Office Action concede that Yamamoto does not disclose externally outputting an eject permission signal to an information processing apparatus. As such, Yamamoto is also not seen to disclose or suggest a storage unit outputting an eject permission signal to an information processing apparatus after completion of a waiting period.

Uchida is not seen to remedy the above-noted deficiencies of Yamamoto. As understood by Applicants, Uchida is directed to a disk loading controller that feeds a disk, and an authentication control section which authenticates an authorized user and outputs a disk ejection instruction if a registered password is input. See Uchida, Abstract.

Thus, Uchida simply discloses receiving an eject command and ejecting the disk if

a user is properly authenticated. Uchida is not seen to disclose or suggest (i) invalidating, by a storage unit, a connection with an information processing apparatus when an eject instruction is received, (ii) waiting, by the storage unit, until an operation which should be complete in the storage unit before the storage unit is ejected is complete, after the invalidation unit starts to invalidate the connection, and (iii) outputting an eject permission signal to the information processing apparatus as a response to the eject instruction, after completion of the waiting.

Therefore, independent Claims 1 and 12 are believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

The dependent claims are also submitted to be patentable because they set forth additional aspects of the present invention and are dependent from the independent claims discussed above. Therefore, separate and individual consideration of each dependent claim is respectfully requested.

Turning to a formal matter, an Information Disclosure Statement is being submitted herewith. Consideration of the documents cited therein is respectfully requested.

No other matters being raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,

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